

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUANDA 00658 301043Z

20

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-05 MC-02 IO-10 OMB-01 /088 W

----- 118976

R 300850Z MAY 75

FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3608

USLO PEKING

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PFOR AO

SUBJECT: HIS STATUS UNCERTAIN, LUCIO LARA DEPARTS FOR CHINA

1. A DELEGATION FROM THE POPULAR MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA (MPLA) DEPARTED LUANDA ON MAY 27 ENROUTE TO PEKING FOR AN OFFICIAL VISIT. THE GROUP, HEADED BY LUCIO LARA (SOMETIMES NUMBER TWO MAN IN MPLA), IS COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF "YOUTH, WOMEN, WORKERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PARTIES FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE."

2. MPLA IS HEAVILY SUPPORTED IN THE CURRENT ANGOLAN FIGHTING BY THE USSR WHILE ITS CHIEF RIVAL, THE NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA (FNLA), RECEIVES CHINESE ARMS AND HAS 120 CHINESE ADVISORS IN ZAIRE. MPLA'S VISIT TO CHINA AT THIS TIME IS VIEWED HERE AS AN ATTEMPT BY THE MOVEMENT TO CONVINCE THE CHINESE TO REDUCE THEIR SUPPORT FOR FNLA AND/OR BEGIN CONTRIBUTING TO MPLA.

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3. LARA GAVE A SHORT DEPARTURE STATEMENT RECALLING THAT CHINA WAS ONE OF THE FIRST COUNTRIES TO ESTABLISH CONTACTS WITH MPLA AND THAT MPLA'S PRESIDENT AGOSTINHO NETO MADE A VISIT TO CHINA IN 1970. HE WOULD ONLY SAY THAT THE PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT IS TO IMPROVE MPLA'S RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC.

4. LARA, A MULATTO, IS A VETERAN MPLA STALWART WITH ROOTS GOING BACK TO THE PART'S FORMATION IN THE MID-1950'S. HE HAS BEEN SECOND IN COMMAND SINCE 1958 AND HE HAS A CONSIDERABLE POWER BASE IN THE PARTY. RECENTLY WE HAVE HEARD THAT NETO HAS SECRETLY DEMOTED LARA AND ELEVATED A POWERLESS SYCOPHANT, LOPO DE NASCIMENTO, TO REPLACE HIM. HOWEVER, AT MPLA'S BELATED MAY DAY DEMONSTRATION ON MAY 22, THE CROWD FIRST CHANTED ENTHUSIASTICALLY FOR LARA AND LATER, PERFUNTORILY, FOR NETO.
PORTER

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Message Attributes

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